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CLERK SUPREME COURT

In the Supreme Court of Iowa

Request for Public Comment Regarding Proposed Amendments to the Rules for Expanded Media Coverage	))))	**Order**

The Iowa Supreme Court requests public comment on proposed amendments to the Rules for Expanded Media Coverage in Chapter 25 of the Iowa Court Rules.

The supreme court adopted the Iowa rules for expanded media coverage in 1979. In the decades since the court approved the rules, Iowa courts and the media have collaborated to provide audio and visual media coverage to the public of thousands of judicial proceedings. The rules, however, do not specifically address developing forms of technology such as smart phones, social media, and blogging.

The supreme court recently created the Committee on Expanded Media Coverage (committee) to review Chapter 25 and propose changes. Judicial Branch staff worked with the Iowa Freedom of Information Council to identify representatives of the court and the media to serve on the committee. Committee membership was balanced by gender and geography and included a district judge, district associate judge, district court administrator, a county attorney, a public defender, and a private practice attorney, as well as members of the news media representing newspaper, television, and radio reporters, photographers, multimedia editors, editors, regional media coordinators, and bloggers. Iowa Supreme Court Justice Bruce Zager chaired the committee.

The committee surveyed each of the 13 regional coordinators (liaisons between the news media and the courts) in Iowa and the appellate media

coordinator to identify areas where the current rules may need updating. The committee examined the media's use of new technologies and reviewed expanded media rules from other states.

The committee's report and proposed amendments seek to provide a more consistent use of expanded media coverage statewide while continuing to allow for judicial discretion in individual cases. The committee crafted the amended rules to allow transparency of the legal process while not disrupting court proceedings or interfering with individual rights. The amendments include some suggestions from the court.

The supreme court requests public comment on the proposed rule changes prior to taking further action on them. The court requests special emphasis in the comments on sections 25.3(2) and 25.3(3)(a) concerning initial appearances in criminal cases.

Copies of the proposed amendments to the expanded media coverage rules can be found at: www.iowacourts.gov/About_the_Courts/Supreme_Court/Orders/. In addition, copies are available at the office of the Clerk of the Supreme Court, Judicial Branch Building, 1111 East Court Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa, 50319.

Any interested organization, agency or person may submit comments regarding proposed amendments. Comments about a proposed rule must refer to the specific rule number and the specific numbered line or lines to which the comments are directed. Comments sent by email must be emailed to **rules.comments@iowacourts.gov,** must state "Expanded Media Coverage Rules" in the subject line of the email and must be sent **as an attachment to the e-mail in Microsoft Word format.** Instead of submission by email, comments may be delivered in person or mailed to the Clerk of the Supreme

Court, Judicial Branch Building, 1111 East Court Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa, 50319.

Any comments received may be posted on the Iowa Judicial Branch website.

The deadline for submitting comments is 4:30 p.m. on Monday, January 6, 2014.

Dated this 28th day of October, 2013.

The Supreme Court of Iowa

By Mark S. Cady

Mark S. Cady, Chief Justice